

Memorandum

To: Chair and Commissioners

Date: July 3, 2002

From: Diane C. Eidam

File:
Reference Number 5.2c
Information

**Ref.: STATUS REPORT OF THE TRI-COUNTY (AMADOR, ALPINE,
CALAVERAS) PARTNERSHIP**

This is an information item from Amador, Alpine and Calaveras counties to discuss the delivery of the four State highway projects funded with pooled STIP funds. The report will include a discussion of the developments regarding Caltrans and the Tri-Counties partners' efforts to achieve project delivery on four STIP funded projects.

The four State highway projects to be discussed are:

Calaveras SR 4 Bypass, Angels Camp
Calaveras SR 4 Passing Lane
Amador SR 88 Passing Lanes, Hams & Cooks Stations
Amador SR 49 Bypass

**ALPINE COUNTY LOCAL
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

50 Diamond Valley Road
Markleeville, CA 96120
(530) 694-2140

**AMADOR COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

11400 American Legion Drive, Suite A
Jackson, CA 95642
(209) 267-2282

**CALAVERAS COUNCIL
OF GOVERNMENTS**

692 Marshall Avenue, Unit A
San Andreas, CA 95249
(209) 754-2094

July 1, 2002

Diane Eidam
Executive Director
California Transportation Commission
1120 N St., MS-52
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Tri-County Partnership Status Report

Dear Ms. Eidam:

On behalf of the Calaveras Council of Governments (CCOG) and the Tri-County Partnership, I wish to express heartfelt thanks to you and the California Transportation Commission for your ongoing attention to and support of the Tri-County projects. At the April CTC meeting the Commission asked that the Tri-Counties (Amador, Alpine and Calaveras) report back in July on the progress of our projects.

This letter is intended to provide you with developments since the April CTC meeting regarding Caltrans and the Tri-Counties partners' efforts to achieve project delivery on four STIP funded projects. To date the story is a mixed one – some real milestones were achieved, and some new obstacles have appeared.

Calaveras State Route 4 Angels Camp Bypass

This project is proceeding on schedule, and completed project approval and environmental clearance on June 28, 2002. Design work is scheduled for completion in August 2004 and Right of Way Certification in November 2004.

Calaveras State Route 4 Passing Lane

In recent months the Tri-Counties learned that this project requires approximately 30,000 cubic meters of fill material to be imported from offsite. Tri-County staff and Caltrans have been working to find sites close to the project site qualified to provide the fill material. Three potential sites have been located. The estimated cost to acquire and transport the fill will add approximately \$300,000 to the current \$3.11 million project cost estimate. At their June 12, 2002 meeting, Calaveras COG directed me to ask the CTC to

July 1, 2002
Diane Eidam, Executive Director
California Transportation Commission
Page Two

program the cost increase from the existing Tri- County STIP reserve. That request will likely be included in a STIP amendment to be submitted for notice at the August Commission meeting and approval at the October meeting. The Calaveras 4 Passing Lane project completed project approval and environmental clearance on April 10, 2002. Design work and Right of Way are proceeding on schedule.

Amador Highway 88 Passing Lanes

This project is proceeding on schedule with PA&ED also completed on June 28, 2002. As for mitigation for the project, the U.S. Forest Service has requested a scenic turnout be built near the project due to loss of timber and scenic values. This will entail an estimated \$53,000 cost increase. However, it is anticipated that the project will still be within budget.

Amador Highway 49 Bypass

Caltrans and FHWA completed environmental clearance on April 8, 2002. The final Project Report was also signed by the District Director on that date. Since then the Bypass has faced issues in three major areas: 1. Environmental mitigation, 2. Relinquishment, and 3. Construction cost.

Caltrans and ACTC representatives are reviewing the mitigation plan, which currently estimates a \$1 million cost overrun for tree planting and wetlands enhancement. In addition, Caltrans District 10 Environmental staff have advised that local Native American Tribal organizations have stated that there are potentially significant Native American archeological sites that could be discovered during Bypass construction. With only \$275,000 budgeted for Native American monitoring and mitigation of "unforeseen" archeological sites, there is a potential for a much higher cost. Caltrans has assured that any additional Native American concerns and mitigation costs will be identified before the project's construction allocation is requested (March 2003).

The cost to relinquish old Highway 49 to the Cities of Amador City, Sutter Creek and Amador County after the 49 Bypass is built comes out of the project's construction cost estimate. Caltrans has proposed and the Cities and County have accepted an offer to pay cash for the cost to bring old Highway 49 up to a "state of good repair" before relinquishment. Caltrans estimated these costs to be approximately \$1 million. After a series of meetings were held during 2001, it has been determined that the actual relinquishment cost is \$3 million (a \$2 million cost increase).

July 1, 2002
Diane Eidam, Executive Director
California Transportation Commission
Page Three

With the project design 90% complete, Caltrans has advised the Amador County Transportation Commission (ACTC) that the project will now generate approximately 300,000 cubic meters of excess material. The Project Report, completed on April 8, 2002, shows only 20,000 cubic meters of excess. Removal of this higher quantity of material could cost less than \$1 million or more than \$3 million depending upon where the material is disposed. Caltrans' latest construction cost estimates (6/27/02) suggest a \$1 million decrease, meaning they are using the lower cost estimate and/or most of the cost for exporting the excess material is made up by cost savings in other areas.

Based on the above, there is an approximate cost increase of \$2 million for the Highway 49 Bypass project. The ACTC is prepared to submit a STIP amendment request to "swap out" \$1.78 million that is programmed for PA&ED on the County's new start project (SR 88 Pine Grove Corridor Improvements). The balance of this cost increase, approximately \$1.8 million will need to come from the Tri-Counties \$4.295 million STIP reserve unless further cost reductions or an alternative funding source can be identified.

Calaveras COG Buses

In the 2002 RTIP the Tri-Counties also made reference to a future purchase of two transit vehicles for the Calaveras Transit System. These vehicles were intended to be funded from STIP funds. In the amendment to be submitted for the October CTC meeting the Tri-Counties will request \$200,000 for the purchase of these vehicles. The Calaveras County's fledgling transit system recently attained a 10% fare box return ratio for the first time ever in FY2001-02. The purchase of these two vehicles with STIP funds will supplement a purchase already initiated of two additional vehicles to be purchased with TDA funds. The current fleet is wearing out quickly due to high mileage and some aging vehicles. In order to continue successful operations it is critical that the system acquire four new vehicles. The County does not have enough TDA to purchase more than two vehicles this year.

Summary

The milestones accomplished for the Tri-County projects include completion of PA &ED for all four of our STIP funded highway projects (the State Route 4 Angels Camp Bypass, the Calaveras State Route 4 Passing Lane, the Amador 88 Passing Lanes and the Amador Highway 49 Bypass). A cost increase of approximately \$210,000 on the State Route 4

July 1, 2002
Diane Eidam, Executive Director
California Transportation Commission
Page Four

Passing Lane, a \$200,000 net increase (after swapping out one new-start project) for the Highway 49 Bypass and \$200,000 needed for transit vehicles in Calaveras brings a total of \$610,000 in needed additional STIP programming. These funds would come from the Tri-Counties \$4.295 million in STIP reserves. They should all be programmed for fiscal years 02/03.

The Tri-Counties are aware that the CTC may not have any funds available for programming in FY 02/03. The counties will continue to try and find cost savings. We will also remain open to Caltrans and CTC for ways to pay for our projects and to keep them on schedule.

Sincerely,

Charles F. Field, Executive Director
Amador County Transportation Commission

George Dondero, II, Executive Director
Calaveras Council of Governments

Leonard Turnbeaugh, Executive Secretary
Alpine County Local Transportation Commission